

Appl. No. 09/411,524
Preliminary Amendment Dec. 16, 2003

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1.(currently amended) A tracking system in which a package is to be sent from a user to a recipient by requesting shipping through Internet resources associated with carriers capable of delivering the package to the recipient, in which the user determines the carrier to be used for shipping a package to a particular recipient, comprising:

means for generating a tracking number, the tracking number being associated with a package to be sent from the user to the recipient by a selected carrier;

means for generating a tracking request, the tracking request containing the tracking number associated with the package, as well as information of the particular carrier which is to deliver the package to the recipients;

a storage location adapted to store the tracking requests;

a tracking coordinator adapted to receive said tracking request and adapted to generate tracking objects and adapted to send said tracking objects to a tracking website of the selected carrier;

means for receiving results from the tracking website of the selected carrier;

means for updating the shipping server data storage with the results from the carrier website; and

wherein the tracking coordinator limits the generation of tracking objects for each of a plurality of carriers so that the tracking objects are a particular carrier so as to be generated no more frequently than a predetermined number of tracking objects per predetermined time interval that is established by the carrier.

Appl. No. 09/411,524
Preliminary Amendment Dec. 16, 2003

2. (previously amended) A tracking system for a shipping system as defined in claim 1, further comprising a tracking result queue for receiving the results from selected carrier websites and for outputting these results for delivery to a shipping system server data storage device.

3.(original) A tracking system for a shipping system as defined in claim 2, wherein the shipping system server has an instant tracking component for allowing a user to generate a tracking request for a package, wherein the tracking coordinator has means for generating a tracking object for the user tracking request that is prioritized with respect to other tracking objects generated for the same carrier as that associated with the user's package.

4. (canceled)

5. (canceled)

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6.(original) A tracking system for a shipping system as defined in claim 3, wherein the tracking coordinator has means for generating tracking objects to a carrier tracking website using multiple Internet Protocol addresses.

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7.(original) A tracking system for a shipping system as defined in claim 3, wherein the shipping system server includes a scheduler for automatically retrieving information required to generate a tracking request from the data storage device, wherein the scheduler times said retrieval of information to occur at a predetermined time.

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8.(original) A tracking system for a shipping system as defined in claim 1, wherein the shipping system server has an instant tracking component for allowing a user to generate a tracking request for a package, wherein the

Appl. No. 09/411,524

Preliminary Amendment Dec. 16, 2003

tracking coordinator has means for generating a tracking object for the user tracking request that is prioritized with respect to other tracking objects generated for the same carrier as that associated with the user's package.

9-12. (canceled)

13. (previously amended) A tracking system as defined in claim 1, further comprising an E-mail services component for generating an E-mail message to a party specified by the user when the tracking information indicates that the package has been delivered to the recipient.

14. (canceled)

8 15. (currently amended) A tracking method for a shipping system in which a package is to be sent from a user to a recipient by requesting said shipping through Internet resources associated with carriers capable of delivering the package to the recipient, in which the user of the shipping system determines the carrier to be used for shipping a package to a recipient, and in which the shipping system has a shipping system server with a data storage device for storing package tracking data, comprising the steps of:

- (a) generating a tracking number associated with a package to be sent from the user to the recipient by a selected carrier;
- (b) generating a tracking request containing the tracking number associated with the package, as well as information of the particular carrier which is to deliver the package to the recipients;
- (c) storing the tracking requests;
- (d) generating tracking objects and sending said tracking objects to the tracking website of the selected carrier;
- (e) receiving results from the tracking website of the selected

Appl. No. 09/411,524
Preliminary Amendment Dec. 16, 2003
carrier;

- (f) updating the shipping server data storage with the results from the carrier website; and
- (g) limiting the generation of tracking objects for each one of a plurality of carriers ~~a particular carrier~~ so that the tracking objects are generated no more frequently than a predetermined number per predetermined time interval established by the carrier.

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16.(original) A tracking method as defined in claim 15, further comprising the step of receiving the results from all of the carrier websites and for outputting these results for delivery to the shipping system server data storage device.

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17.(original) A tracking method as defined in claim 16, further comprising the steps of allowing a user to generate an instant tracking request for a package, and for generating a tracking object for the user tracking request that is prioritized with respect to other tracking objects generated for the same carrier as that associated with the user's package.

18. (canceled)

19.(original) A tracking method as defined in claim 17, further comprising the step of limiting the generation of tracking objects so that the total number generated for a particular carrier over a predetermined time interval does not exceed a predetermined number, regarding the pacing of the generation of said tracking objects.

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20.(original) A tracking method as defined in claim 17, further comprising the step of generating tracking objects to a carrier tracking website using

Appl. No. 09/411,524
Preliminary Amendment Dec. 16, 2003
multiple Internet Protocol addresses.

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21.(original) A tracking method as defined in claim 17, further comprising the step of automatically scheduling retrieving information required to generate a tracking request from the data storage device at a predetermined time.

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22.(original) A tracking method as defined in claim 15, wherein the shipping system server has an instant tracking component for allowing a user to generate a tracking request for a package, wherein the tracking coordinator has means for generating a tracking object for the user tracking request that is prioritized with respect to other tracking objects generated for the same carrier as that associated with the user's package.

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23. (canceled)

24.(previously amended) A tracking method as defined in claim 15, further comprising the step of limiting the generation of tracking objects so that the total number generated for a particular carrier over a predetermined time interval does not exceed a predetermined number.

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25.(original) A tracking method as defined in claim 22, further comprising the step of generating tracking objects to a carrier tracking website using multiple Internet Protocol addresses.

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26.(previously amended) A tracking method as defined in claim 15, further comprising the step of automatically scheduling retrieving information required to generate a tracking request from the data storage device at a predetermined time.